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The Commonweal

December 30, 1949

Half a Century

Ronald A. Knox

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Seamen Priests

Peter F. Anson

15c

VOLUME LI

NUMBER 12

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The Commonweal

WEEK BY WEEK

Man's Hope

IN A WAY this, too, is a war Christmas. Even though the nation is not sending men up to a firing line, a battle is on. This time others are doing the fighting for us. The front line troops are the men and women in the Russian satellite nations who, in the face of overwhelming force, keep resistance alive in their hearts. Even to them, to those beleaguered fellow-Christians, whom we so easily put out of mind, hope must secretly return this Christmas.

Here in the United States there are carols as usual; church bells the nation over ring out. The radio brings Christmas festivities from all over the world into the American living room. The crêche is set up in our churches, the tree in our homes. The happiness of a family together for the holidays makes the misery of a bleak Czech uranium mine and all the physical and mental torture suffered by the victims of oppression everywhere seem remote indeed. Christmas, and a vague good feeling, are at hand again.

BACK of all this good feeling, we have at least a dull sense that there is something more than tinsel and bright lights and good cheer. There has to be something more than this to keep the heart in hope, wherever a man is. This is, we feel, what Pope Saint Leo meant when, speaking of the feast of the Nativity, he reminded us, in the words of Matins for Christmas Day:

"It is not right that sadness should find a place among those who are keeping the birthday of life, which swallows up the fear of mortality, and brings us to gladness on account of the promise of eternity. No one is shut out from sharing in this gladness: all have one common cause of joy. For as Our Lord, the destroyer of sin and death, finds no one free from guilt, so is He come to set all free. Let the saint exult, for he draws nigh to the palm; let the sinner rejoice, for he is invited to forgiveness; let the Gentile take heart, for he is called unto life. . . . Let us then, dearly beloved, give thanks to God the Father, through His Son, in the Holy Spirit, Who for His great love, wherewith He loved us, has had pity upon us; and when we were dead in sins, has quickened us in Christ, that in Him we might be a new creature and a new work of His hands. . . ."

The Dust Settles in China

AS MANY Americans were traveling home for Christmas, across the Pacific in China the two rival leaders in the war there, Chiang Kai-shek and Mao Tze-tung, were doing some year-end traveling of their own. The Communist, Mao, went "home" by way of the trans-Siberian railroad to Moscow and Stalin. The Nationalist, Chiang, found the end of a long anti-Communist journey in exile on Formosa. So, for the time being, has one nation's fight for freedom been lost; so has the "dust," that Mr. Acheson said he was waiting for, settled in China.

Although the State Department publicly washed its hands weeks ago of Chiang and the Nationalists, it now finds itself in an embarrassing dilemma over Formosa. Our military strategists have marked this island on their maps as one point in the so-called "outer defense ring" protecting the United States. They say it should be held. Were it to fall, Japan and the Philippines would be flanked, our Pacific security broken into. Yet how can we do an about-face now and send arms to the discredited Nationalists—the only ones who might defend Formosa?

That, in so many words, is the State Department's particular dilemma. So far we have taken no action—perhaps Mr. Acheson has spotted some dust flying over Formosa, too.

If Formosa is invaded, we assume that the Chinese Communists will do it. Here is what Secretary Acheson wrote about the Chinese Communists in his letter transmitting the White Paper to the President: "The Communist leaders have forsworn their Chinese heritage and have publicly announced their subservience to a foreign power, Russia, which during the last 50 years, under czars and Communists alike, has been most assiduous in its efforts to extend its control in the Far East. . . . The foreign domination has been masked behind the facade of a vast crusading movement."

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• NEXT WEEK •

FATHER JEROME D'SOUZA, S.J., now in this country as an Indian delegate to the United Nations, writes on "Gandhi's Economy and Modern India."

"Mahatma Gandhi wanted to make India self-sufficient in food, and, as far as possible, every village a self-sufficient unit. Opposition to the machine and main attention to the raising of food crops in preference to industrial crops implies that there is no room in Gandhi's system for heavy, or large-scale, industry. . . . To what extent will New India remain faithful to this idea?"

A Communist attack on Formosa would be, according to these words, an illegal aggression. Fighting it are the Nationalists. They have a right to defend themselves and Formosa. They have a right to receive our help—not because Formosa is an outpost in our defense system, but because it is an island where there are free men fighting Communist aggression. We need not give this help unconditionally—we should insist that the Nationalists clean house, that they give the non-Communist Chinese a positive program of social reform to believe in and, if necessary, to fight for.

The fact is, the Nationalists are now a free Chinese government in exile, the official Chinese Opposition, representing actually and potentially our hope to see the Chinese people free of foreign dictation, so that they may institute a program of social reform of their own making. "Ultimately," writes Mr. Acheson, "the profound civilization and the democratic individualism of China will reassert themselves and she will throw off the foreign yoke. I consider that we should encourage all developments in China which now and in the future work toward this end."

Those are wise, brave words. The only question now is, how much more dust will have to settle while Mr. Acheson and Mr. Jessup, chins in hand, play "the thinker," pondering the fate of yet another island in the free world?

Christmas Amnesty

THE conscientious objector of necessity is a lonely figure in modern society. While others fight a battle of bombs and blood, serving their fellows and what they think is justice in the brotherhood of armies, the C.O. feels obliged to serve the same cause by cutting himself off from the common effort. All the world may say that black is white, that good is bad, he reasons, but a man must do what he thinks is right and refuse to do what he thinks is wrong. That, fundamentally, is the position the C.O. takes, and as far as it goes, he has all reasonable, moral men on his side. But the problem doesn't end there.

"Fifty million Frenchmen can't be wrong," a generation of Americans at war once sang, and the song expressed the mood if not the reasoned belief of those who sang it. The wartime C.O. thinks differently. More important, he acts differently. Fifty million Frenchmen (or 130 million Americans) *can* be wrong, he says. And he says it by word and deed. He says it boldly, while the flags are waving, the cruel casualty reports are coming in, and the silver-tongued orators repeat ". . . But wrong or right, my country!" The C.O. stands alone then, and just because he is one man standing apart, he is a threat and a chal-

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lenge to everything from which he cut himself off. It would be good if he were not a threat because then he could give this lonely, dramatic witness to the idea that each man must serve the truth as he knows it, that every man must "do good and avoid evil." But because he is a threat to the common effort, which is presumably undertaken with a purpose for justice and right as sincere and highminded as his own, society, acting by its laws, isolates him and cuts him off even further from the community it thinks he endangers.

He is not being punished for his beliefs, according to the legal theory, though in fact it amounts to that. He is being isolated and set apart because he is a real threat to society and the laws he refuses to obey. No man, society reasons, is beyond the law, and there must be sanctions. The C.O., of course, feels obliged to serve a higher law and even denies the justice of the laws he breaks. But while society accepts its own laws, it has no choice but to reject men who break them. It is the price the C.O. pays for his belief, as the soldier sometimes pays with blood.

Two years ago at Christmas time, President Truman granted individual pardons to 1,523 conscientious objectors. These 1,523 were less than a quarter of the C.O.'s convicted of wartime draft violations. In all, 15,000 men were so convicted, some for criminal evasion but most for political and religious objection. The remainder of these C.O.'s, who averaged three years in prison during hostilities, are still branded as felons. In some states they are deprived of the right to vote, to hold political office or to enter many of the professions.

Now there is a loose movement among different civic and social groups, representing many religions and many viewpoints, to urge President Truman to grant full pardon to those still unpardoned during this Christmas season, 1949. There is a tradition behind the time chosen. President Roosevelt granted a Christmas amnesty to World War I violators in 1933, and the U. S. has granted Christmas pardons to many, many political prisoners abroad. The movement is one that can be supported by all men of good will. Catholics especially, who put so much stress on the duties of conscience and each of whom is a potential conscientious objector by very reason of the Church's teaching on a just war, should be in the forefront of such a movement.

The present restrictions on the wartime C.O.'s are no longer protective. To brand men as common criminals whose only crime was that they served the ultimate demands of conscience smacks of vindictive punishment and persecution. Society has no right to administer that kind of punishment; it has no right to persecute any man for his beliefs. When we lend our voice to those addressing this plea to the President this Christmas, it is not so much in the name of Christian mercy that we speak as in the name of justice.

John L. Lewis, Stabilizer

THE three-day week which Mr. Lewis decreed for the coal industry — for all companies which have not yet accepted his latest terms—is something more than a device to keep the Mine Workers in a good bargaining position. In addition to keeping stockpiles low, and industrial consumers and coal dealers on edge, it is an effort to maintain supply and demand in some sort of balance. For Mr. Lewis' tactics through the years have hastened an inevitable process: the supplanting of coal by oil and natural gas in many homes and industries. The aggregate effect of declining coal exports, continuing sales of oil burners and gas heaters for homes, the switch to Diesel locomotives and the slight drop in national industrial production is so great that many believe that in three days a week the miners can produce all the coal that's needed now.

One factor can be counted on slightly to modify this prospect. Demand is good under current restricted production. A number of smaller mines and marginal producers now find customers for all their output. But with higher wages and royalties under a new contract, these would drop out of the competition; only the more efficient mines would be able to continue.

That might conceivably lengthen the work week another half-day, or even another full day, for the miners who are working. With production cut in this way, the UMW would continue as a smaller but still powerful union.

It is the next step in the reported Lewis calculations that seems most dubious. He sees the shrinkage in coal demand as only temporary. When American oil reserves play out as he estimates in ten or twenty years, then coal (which we have in abundance) will have another day. Mines will reopen, new diggings will begin and the United Mine Workers will expand their rolls and influence to new proportions. The catch is that new oil fields are being discovered all the time; California and Gulf Coast offshore deposits are now believed to be nearly as bountiful as the oilfields in the Middle East. Moreover, new methods of converting natural oil to gas are bringing that process nearer and nearer to commercial feasibility.

If Mr. Lewis' long-term strategy for his union is based on such a miscalculation, his high-handed efforts to stabilize the industry will nonetheless have some good effect. Where producers have failed to keep production from getting so out of hand that coal is a drug on the market, Lewis is seeing to it that the commodity remains in

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effective demand. He has made it plain that the nation's users can get along with curtailed production. But his present wage and royalty demands, if met, will make it inevitable that much of the curtailment will result from the elimination of a number of the smaller (not necessarily more equitable) coal producers. Survival of the fittest is an unlikely procedure for arriving at the common good.

Sounds

ON DECEMBER 19 the Washington, D. C. Public Utilities Commission decided that "the conclusion is inescapable . . . radio reception in street cars and buses is not an obstacle to safety of operation. In fact, through the creation of better will among passengers, it tends to improve the condition under which the public rides." The Commission cited a public opinion survey which reported 76.3% of the passengers in favor of the broadcasts, 6.6% against. Only half of those opposed were, in the measured diction of the New York *Times,* "implacably hostile."

The sound broadcast is not Musak's distant violins, such as have recently been introduced into restaurants to cushion the clatter, into offices to calm the stenographers, and into hospitals to drug the psychotic. The sound on Washington buses is a commercial sound — advertisements with recorded music. It is the same sound that is heard on buses in twelve other cities, including St. Louis, Baltimore, Worcester, Tacoma, Cincinnati, Houston, and Cleveland; it is no local phenomenon. It is a sound which will provide the Washington transit company with an annual $100,000 revenue when it is installed in all 1,500 of Washington's public conveyances.

As this considered judgment was made, the New York Public Service Commission decided to look into the situation at Grand Central Terminal where music and commercials regale those who travel. Those travelers who resent being trapped while a grotesquely enunciating announcer speaks to them of cars and tires and chewing gum have been rallied by the *New Yorker* magazine. They protest that men have a natural right to be by themselves. But in its most recent arguments the *New Yorker* has let slip not only a note of rage but just a hint of panic. The public opinion surveys are against them. One commuter said, "something like this breaks up the monotony and gives a homelike feeling."

That is precisely it. Without the sound of professional voices and cheap and soporific music, men are lonely. In the intelligence there must be a sound. It can be the sound of one's conversation (and the fleeting reflection upon the conversation which exists at the instant of speech), or it can be the sound of one's thought or love, or it can be the sound of the railroad station. When it is the noise of traffic, people, deisel engines, of feet on marble, it is a sound of only momentary meaning and it is a part of urban life. It is a reality. When it comes from the radio or Grand Central's public address system and tells of the 1950 Oldsmobile it rationalizes one's inclination to avoid what is real, and wet, and unpleasant. Life and men provide quite enough of their own rationalizations for Transit Radio, Inc., of Cincinnati to inject the sedative from just behind the left ear.

Only 3.3% of the Washington bus-riders are 'implacable' opponents of the noise. They are perhaps the only ones who still care; and they who wish to think, read, or observe the rain on the street deserve protection. God knows the people have long since been overpowered by the opinion-makers, the conviction-mongers, the passion-creators. Perhaps they will someday revolt, but that is unlikely. Perhaps those 3.3% will someday be recognized as socially beneficent and be protected by the government—preserves of quiet set aside for them in Idaho. Perhaps the only ones who will not perish will be those who go to the Trappists, and read E. B. White there where only bells sound.

No More "Me Too"?

ONE aspect of the recent furor among Republican leaders in favor of taking a straight conservative line in the next election is that they could take it up to the hilt. They could bring a new tone of conviction to their campaign. From their viewpoint this would be perhaps the only advantage. If the nation's voters have as their choice either plain laissez faire or continuing government aids, there can be no doubt as to the result. A coalition of Northern Republicans and Southern Democrats under such a banner would be a pushover.

Much as this development is devoutly hoped for by the Truman forces, it would present the voter with an unhappy choice. Conscious of the inequities inevitable under conservative laissez faire, and of the dangers of the expansion of the welfare state, many would have no place to mark on their ballot. The issue would be clear-cut enough, but neither alternative would be acceptable, and no feasible third party in sight.

Therefore it is hoped from this vantage point that the Republicans will be realistic about the prospect. They cannot win by opposing social benefits. If they foresee "me too-ism" as no more effectual than before, they might go at things from still another angle. They might look into the possibilities of advocating the decentralizing of social benefits and of supplying them more and more from municipal and other local administrative centers.

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Half a Century

A comparison of Catholicism in 1900 and 1950 indicates "which way the wind is blowing"

Ronald A. Knox

TO be sure, fifty years is a short space of time; and it is one of the most comfortable things about being a Catholic that, if the problems and the perils of your age threaten to keep you awake at night, you can always reflect, "Well, I suppose in three hundred years' time all these things will look rather trivial"—a formula which you never hear from the mouth of Sir Stafford Cripps. Still, they have been busy years, 1900 to 1950, and I hope it won't be altogether uninteresting to contemplate the legacy of them.

Only a week or two ago, *The Times* came out with a long right-hand-page article, which made us all sit up. Usually those articles are about self-government in the West Indies, and we instinctively skip them. But this one had a headline as large as life, "CATHOLICISM TODAY; RELATIONS BETWEEN ROME AND THE CHRISTIAN WORLD."

First, let us note a point of language. It is a capital mistake to dismiss any subject of discussion with the comment, "After all, it is only a matter of words." Words are vastly important; when they are used with careful deliberation, they deserve to be studied; when they are used off-hand, without thinking, they give you an invaluable clue to the unconscious processes which are going on in the other man's mind. Now, in this article, not always but as often as not, we are referred to as "Catholics" without any "Roman" tacked on in front. That would have been impossible, I think, fifty years ago—indeed, in *The Times* it would have been impossible ten years ago. I always wonder what would be thought of our Catholic Press if we never referred to Mr. Gallacher as a Communist, but always as a "Russian Communist?" Yet *The Times* used to have a strict editorial policy of inserting the word "Roman" before the word "Catholic." Let us give the article credit, then, for a certain affability of approach. When an Englishman talks of affairs over the Border as Scottish, not Scotch, you know he is on his good behavior; and the same may be said, when a writer in the newspapers refers to us as Catholics, without any geographical disqualification.

Another thing which hits the eye as you first look at the article is a whole paragraph and more of figures; the writer, for whatever reason, has prefaced his remarks by giving us, in summary, statistics of the diffusion of Catholics throughout the world, and, more especially, in the English-speaking countries. Perhaps the author's implication was, that in a Church of nearly four hundred millions it was a pity only a sixth should belong to English-speaking countries; but if he meant that, he was too tactful to say so. The figures are thrown at your head, in the journalistic manner apparently with the idea of making them say, "Gosh, that's a lot."

★

HERE, the comparison between 1950 and 1900 may help to clear our ideas a little. That there should be eighteen hundred Sees in the Catholic Church becomes a more significant statement, when you reflect that fifty years ago there were not much more than a thousand. Not that that is any strict test of growth, but it does suggest a certain vitality, a certain power of reacting to situations. When you get down to actual counting of heads, is our progress so very remarkable? Do the figures for England look large, when you consider our yearly intake of ten thousand or so converts; do the figures for Canada look large, when you consider the Dionne quintuplets? No, if you confine your attention to the subjects of King George, I think the growth will impress you as steady, rather than spectacular. What is really interesting, and for two separate reasons, is the part played in these calculations by the United States of America.

Interesting, first, for this reason: that the discovery of America by our own fellow-countrymen has taken place almost entirely in the last hundred years, and very largely in the last fifty years. You can trace it in literature; *Martin Chuzzlewit* was written in the 'forties of the last century, and Mrs. Trollope's *Domestic Manners of the Americans* only a few years earlier. It is true that these authors were very angry with their American cousins for not respecting English copyright; their *animus,* then, may be discounted. But the

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extraordinary thing is that it should have been possible, a hundred years ago, to write about America as a world quite unknown to the British public, as remote from us as the head-hunters.

All that has changed. Air-transport, and the memory of two wars, and the dollar gap, and the consciousness that the world is rapidly splitting up into two hemispheres, Eastern and Western, have convinced the most backwoods parish-councillor among us that our destinies are linked with the heirs of General Choke, and Senator Gotobed, and Jim Pinkerton. The Great American Jest is a joke no longer. And accordingly, the article in *The Times* is not content with estimating the number of Catholics in the British Commonwealth; it gives you statistics, also, for the United States. Here, at least, it would have done well to give us comparative figures. For, when all is said and done, the total population of the United States hasn't quite doubled during these last fifty years, but the Catholic population of the United States has gone up from ten million to twenty-five million.

No need to discuss how much of that progress is due to immigration, how much to the birth-rate, how much to conversions. The fact remains that the strength of Catholicism is being more and more concentrated in a part of the world where religion, like everything else, takes on an air of efficiency, and almost of modernity. The other day, reading *The Seven Storey Mountain* like everybody else, I was strangely charmed by the circumstance that in the States, if you knocked at the door of a Trappist abbot's cell, you had to wait till a light showed before you entered. Oh, no, there is nothing wrong about that; it enabled the abbot to preserve a holy silence instead of saying "Come in." But that wasn't the reason for the light; the fact was that the abbot, in that land of strange revaluations, wasn't a kind of prince, he was a kind of business magnate. Fifty years ago we thought of Catholics (I am speaking of my Protestant days) as foreigners living in decaying parts of Europe.

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WELL, it is time we got on to the gist of the article; what exactly did it say? A correspondent in a later issue referred to its "clarity"; but I think that must have been a misprint for "charity," because the more I look at it, the more I find it wrapped in an Eleusinian darkness wholly worthy of the columns in which it appeared. The bother about reading any other newspaper is that you know what it is going to say before it begins. The bother about reading *The Times* is that you aren't quite sure what it has said when it has finished. Nothing must be done in a hurry, of course; "the inquiry would certainly be foredoomed to failure were either side thought to prejudge the issue." But "there is a widespread hope that Rome will make a gesture in keeping with the realities of the hour. What is looked for in particular is not expressions of good will at the highest level, which have not been lacking, but that they should be implemented by the initiation of a program of free and open discussion with qualified representatives of the various Christian bodies." In other words, why can't we get together?

Would such a suggestion have been made fifty years ago, a hundred years ago? We must be careful how we limit the wide possibilities of history. As a matter of fact, a century has just elapsed since a Canon of Durham, Canon Townsend, went to Rome and had an interview with Pius IX on this very subject. His formula was a simple one; you had only to rescind the decrees of Trent, and convoke a new council, summoned by all Christian princes (of whom the Pope might be one), to settle the whole business *de novo*. The expedition was not a success; in fact, it was while Canon Townsend was on his way home that the English hierarchy was restored, and Wiseman issued his pastoral from the Flaminian gate. But at any rate he tried.

I am not proposing to say anything now about the merits of the case which this author puts; I mean, about the difficulties, theological and practical, which are suggested by the whole idea of reunion; nor yet about the desirability of Catholics and their neighbors making a united stand, in days so unfriendly to religion. All that has been duly discussed elsewhere; I am only proposing to treat *The Times* article as a kind of barometer, a straw which shows which way the wind blows. And I do think that the tone of it, and the tone of the correspondence which has followed it, can fairly be interpreted as showing a great improvement of temper all round. Perhaps it would be hardly fair, in this connection, to compare the year 1950 with the year 1850, because the year 1850 was one of bitter anti-Catholic agitation; a Prime Minister, in those days, could describe the action of Rome in restoring the hierarchy as insolent and insidious, without pausing to ask himself how an action could possibly be both at once. But even when the brief storm had died down, theological controversy raged, and it was war to the knife. As late as 1900, Catholicism in England was still referred to as "the Italian Mission." I don't think there is any doubt that within the last fifty years our tempers have improved on both sides—at least when we can manage to keep politics out of it. And we ought to credit the writer of *The Times* article with good intentions; with courtesy of speech and with charity of approach.

Where he fails to do justice to the modern situation, it is perhaps not difficult to see where

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his trouble lies. I suspect him of being a man about the same age as myself, and he is thinking in terms of forty or fifty years ago; he can give you statistics from last year's *Directory* as well as another man, but he doesn't know the Church as it is. That is why he is so suspicious of what you may call ecclesiasticism in the Catholic body; we pay too much attention to the machinery of government, to rules and regulations, instead of encouraging thought.

The atmosphere of the article is all wrong. As a person of very inaccurate habit of mind, who has piloted some two dozen books through the diocesan censorship, I think I may claim to know more about it than *The Times*. And of course the idea that the censorship interferes "where diversity of view is officially sanctioned" just isn't true; you can down the man every time. Much worse than that, our author mixes up censorship, which is a purely negative affair, with official inspiration, which so far as the Catholic Press is concerned simply doesn't exist.

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ALL that is not irrelevant to our main theme. This last half-century will be a period of enormous interest to anyone who studies the attitude of the Church towards freedom of thought. In 1900, Leo XIII occupied the Chair of Peter. His had been a most active pontificate, but he was now a man of ninety. He had not dropped the reins of government—the Biblical Commission was set up as late as 1902—but things were beating up to a crisis; Catholic scholars and thinkers, here and there, were adopting the rash opinions of the age and reconciling their attitude, none too scrupulously, with their position as teachers of the traditional faith. Early in the reign of Pius X the storm broke loose; the cry of "Modernism" was in the air, and the faith seemed in peril. A number of opinions were condemned, but the trouble was that you were not dealing with a self-contained heresy, like Luther's; it was a matter of tendencies and shades of meaning. As with Quietism in the late seventeenth century, so with Modernism in the early nineteenth century: a dangerous label had got loose, and nobody was quite sure where it fitted. The authorities everywhere took alarm.

But meanwhile—this is the extraordinary thing—the whole excitement died down almost as quickly as it had started. In 1919, when I went to see the Vicar-General and get my faculties, he started me on the anti-Modernist oath, and then asked, "Have you had tea?" No, I hadn't, so he said, "All right, go on swearing; I'll just go down and order it," and I was left there disavowing Modernism for the benefit of Msgr. Surmont's furniture. The Quietist scare lasted for a century; you can see Père Grou, an émigré under the Revolution, anxiously steering clear of it; Modernism was all over within a couple of decades. Don't, for heaven's sake, interpret me as suggesting that it's all right now; that a Catholic can say anything that comes into his head without fear of censure. No, the Church is still a teaching Church, and she is jealous of the tradition. But the screw, believe me, is much less tight than it was forty years ago. *The Times* man, thinking with the mind of forty years ago, has got it just wrong.

And if he is wrong on the negative side, in imagining that bishops spend most of their time forbidding people to think things, he is equally wrong on the positive side, in imagining that Bishops spend the rest of their time telling people to think things. Much the most remarkable thing that has happened in our time, as far as Catholic life is concerned, is the emergence, both abroad and in England, of an apostolic laity. I am not referring to this or that movement, although several movements have been set on foot to exploit, in the best sense of the word, a growing tendency. I am avoiding even the name "Catholic Action," under which the late Holy Father sought to encourage it. The thing I mean is not the germinating of a plan, or the product of an agitation. It is something which has grown up while we were not looking, like the householder's crop in the parable. It has developed, perhaps, in reaction from modern world-conditions; if so, it is none the less the healthy reaction of a living organism. If only people could realize that the Church *is* an organism, and not an organization!

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THE graph of that change is perhaps most easily traced in France. What notion had we of French Catholicism in the early days of the century? The priests might be fine men, some of them, anyhow, but there were too many of them; they did the piety, and the attitude of the laity seemed to be very much that of the newly-engaged chef, who admitted that he was a Catholic, but when asked whether he would want to go to Mass on Sundays, replied, *Oh, Monsieur, je suis Catholique, mais pas enragé.* The politicians seemed to spend their whole lives in priest-baiting and then, rather inconsistently, summon the priest to their death-beds. As for literature, the mention of the French novel suggested to you at once two names, those of Zola and of Anatole France. You had perhaps just heard of Huysmans, but you had not yet heard of his conversion. Since then, what a galaxy of French writers—I will not tax my linguistic powers by bothering to recite their names—have become known to us, not as Catholics merely, but as Catholics *à l'outrance!* And these, though they

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have greatly helped forward the process of re-Christianizing the intelligentsia of France, were themselves the product of that intelligentsia. In all classes, but more especially in the more educated classes, the drift away from religion seems to have bred, by reaction, a drift towards religion. And even in French politics, which we had given up as hopeless, there has been a halt, and a return. How incurably, fifty years ago, French Catholics seemed committed to the cause of an extinct Royalism! Did a movement towards Christian democracy manifest itself, like the *Sillon,* it was not long before Rome took action, and priests were put in charge of it, and it was heard of no more. Contrast that with the picture you have of French politics today, and the change of atmosphere seems almost a miracle.

As in France, so in England: a school of Catholic writers has grown up, partly as the cause, partly as the result, of this quickened intelligence in the Catholic body. The writer of the article in *The Times,* if I may refer to him once more, thinks poorly of our literary achievements; our books, he says, are only read by the converted—if that were true, we might derive considerable consolation from our statements of royalties. But no, he says, we have to import our culture from France; English-speaking Catholicism has not produced any thinkers who can compare with those outside the Church. You expect, at this point, a list of famous non-Catholic Englishmen; but, by a process of thought which I confess I find obscure, he gives us the names of one Englishman and three Germans.

As in France, so in England, the Catholic revival has been built up in reaction against a strong tendency away from the Christian faith, away from God. We are, as yet, only the backwash of a stream; religion is still losing its hold, from year to year, and if the Catholic body emerges into greater prominence, it only makes itself more surely a target for attack. The fifty years which lie ahead of us may easily bring forth wars or revolutions which will undo the work of centuries, and make all our statistics look foolish. At the best, they will be years of stress and strain, during which we shall be attacked no less bitterly in the name of proletarianism than our fathers were in the name of Protestantism. We, who hand the torch on, do so not with the reassuring message that others can take it easy, but with the warning that the going is desperate, and a fresh spurt is needed before the adversary can be outrun.

Seamen Priests

Priests of the *Mission de la Mer* believe they can reach the seaman only by sharing his daily life.

Peter F. Anson

AT THE recent third annual convention of the National Conference of the Apostleship of the Sea, Thomas A. McDonough, C.Ss.R., Port Chaplain at New Orleans, said: "In some countries we know that priests, as an extraordinary privilege for extraordinary spiritual needs of the seamen, have received permission of their superiors to lay aside their priestly garb, don the dungarees of the seamen and move right on in as workmen priests on the decks and in the engine rooms of merchant ships so that they might better understand the seamen's life and help more effectively to apply the principles of our holy religion to the lives of men of the sea.

"Perhaps we may come to adopt such a course ourselves in the United States. Our own seafaring Catholic brethren today are in many places like sheep without a shepherd. One wonders though when this will, if ever, take place. We do not have enough priests to serve as port chaplains in many of our ports. How then to get priests to sail out on one ship at a time as seamen?"

Actually there are only three such priests who are sailing out on ships as seamen. As none of them seems inclined to publicize his self-sacrificing missionary methods, all that can be stated is that at the time of writing the Abbé Derouet is working as a fireman on a freighter; the Abbé Aspa is carrying on the usual jobs of a purser's assistant, and Père Laloux has been living with the crews of trawlers off Greenland, Newfoundland, and Labrador for the past year or more. The experiences of the last named would be more than enough to supply material for a thrilling story, but, so far, all that has been published are

Peter F. Anson, one of the founders of the Apostleship of the Sea and a founder-member of the Society of Marine Artists, is the author of several books on maritime subjects. His home is on the north-east coast of Scotland.

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a few brief notes recording the names of vessels, dates, and details of latitude and longitude. Such, then, are the workmen-priests who have "donned the dungarees of the seamen" so that they might better understand the seaman's life and help more effectively to apply the principles of our religion to the lives of men of the sea.

But there are other French priests who form part of the *Mission de la Mer* who, in most cases, have "laid aside their priestly garb" and who are living, as well as working, among seamen in ports, sharing their hardships and hazards in every possible manner. The majority of them have had practical experience afloat and hold seamen's books as well as celebrets. They have discarded the traditional soutane of the French clergy. More often than not they wear the characteristic blue roll-collar jersey of French seamen, with ordinary civilian jacket and trousers. In a country like France, where anti-clericalism and Communism are rampant among seafarers, the first thing is to break down prejudice against priests and the Church. The *Mission de la Mer* feels that this can only be achieved by actually sharing the daily life of the workers. Priests will only be accepted as priests when they have been recognized as fellow men.

At Le Havre three priests work in a team. One is employed by the port authority, and his wages support the whole team. The second spends most of his time visiting seamen in hospitals, while the third visits ships in the docks, acts as chaplain to the nautical training schools, and keeps in close touch with the families of seafarers.

In 1948 another team of three priests was sent to Nantes. As no suitable house could be found, they erected a small pre-fabricated shack in the midst of the badly bombed dock area of this great port. Here they carry on their hidden apostolate in real Franciscan poverty. They also look after seafarers in the neighbouring port of Saint-Nazaire at the mouth of the river Loire. The Blessed Sacrament is reserved in a tiny oratory, furnished in a manner that would delight any liturgist. Should it be more convenient for the seamen or for the priests themselves, Mass is celebrated in the evening. The atmosphere of this and other establishments of the *Mission de la Mer* has more in common with that of a Friendship House in the United States than with such luxurious places as Atlantic House, Liverpool, or the Catholic Maritime Club, Brooklyn, where, quite rightly, nothing is regarded as too good to offer the seamen. All that the *Mission de la Mer* can offer is fellowship. The seamen-priests treat the seamen who drop in as brothers —or should one say shipmates? It was quite in keeping with the spirit of the seamen-priests that a few weeks ago one of them should write that he had been making his annual retreat in a lighthouse, situated off the southern coast of Brittany. He explained that he wanted to share the solitude of the lighthouse keepers, and gain personal experience of their isolated existence, cut off from their wives and families. Other priests of the *Mission de la Mer* are stationed at Dunkirk, Rouen, Paimpol, Bordeaux and Marseilles.

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VOCATIONS for this highly specialized form of apostolate are increasing. Several young men are doing their philosophical and theological studies at the Seminary of the *Mission de France* at Lisieux and in other colleges. Any priest or seminarian who wishes to join this organization is then given a two years' course directed to the theoretical and practical study of the social and religious problems connected with the Mercantile Marine and the Fishing Industry. During this period he usually signs on as one of the crew of a freighter or fishing vessel. Thus he acquires a first-hand knowledge of life at sea, not from the detached point of view of a passenger, but from that of the professional sailor. It is only after this hard novitiate that a seamen-priest is sent to work in a port.

In a sense there is nothing new about these seamen-priests. The French have been tackling the Sea Apostolate in a logical and realistic manner for more than three hundred years. Even before the English had changed the name of New Amsterdam to New York, Saint Vincent de Paul and his fellow-priests of the Congregation of the Mission had launched their apostolate among that involuntary class of seafarers—the galley-slaves at Marseilles. Throughout the eighteenth century there were priests on board most of the larger French warships, and what's more, the corsairs (a polite name for pirates) carried priests who shared in all the privations and dangers of the crews. In the last decade of the nineteenth century the French Augustinians of the Assumption established the first group of maritime missionairies in modern times—the *Société des Oeuvres de Mer.*

The object of this society was to bring medical, moral and religious assistance to French seamen and those of other countries, especially those engaged in the deep-sea fisheries. A hospital ship was fitted out and for nearly fifty years the chaplains and doctors carried on a wonderful apostolate among the fishermen working off Iceland and on the Newfoundland Banks. Hospitals and Fishermen's Clubs were maintained in Iceland and on the island of St. Pierre-Miquélon. Exceptional faculties and dispensations were granted by Rome, which, to all intents and purposes, gave the Assumptionists spiritual jurisdiction over seafarers on every ocean of the world. Had it not

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been for the persecution of the Religious Orders and Congregations which started early in the present century, and ended with the banishment of the Assumptionists from France, the *Oeuvres de Mer* might have developed into a world-wide Sea Apostolate organization. But to save the work from being suppressed altogether, the only thing to do was to minimize its spiritual side and to place it under lay direction. The *Oeuvres de Mer* still functions, but its activities are now confined to running non-sectarian Seamen's Clubs in a few French ports.

France can also claim the only professional deep-sea sailor who has been raised to the altars of the Church—Pierre Berthelot, born at Honfleur, Normandy, in 1600. After twenty-three years at sea as a fisherman on the Atlantic and after service in the French Navy, he joined the Carmelites at Goa, taking the name of Denis of the Nativity. He was martyred for his Faith in the East Indies and beatified by Leo XIII in 1900.

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FOUR years ago the Sea Apostolate in France proved that it had not lost its vitality when the hierarchy decided to form a group of priests to live, as well as work, among seamen. The *Mission de la Mer* is really nothing more than the extension into another field of the *Mission de France*—that heroic experiment of sending priests to live and work as factory workers, which had the strong support of the late Cardinal Suhard, Archbishop of Paris. The *Mission de la Mer* is not a new religious order. It is best described as a loosely constituted body of priests, both secular and regular. The major superior is Cardinal Roques, Archbishop of Rennes, with Père J. M. Butel, S.J. acting as Chaplain-general. The members form a family rather than a religious institute—thinking, praying and working together for and among seafarers.

It is doubtful if these seamen-priests would have come into being had it not been for the *Jeunesse Maritime Chrétienne* — the maritime section of the Young Christian Workers. It was established in 1929 by Père Lebret, O.P. and the Abbé Havard. In the past twenty years the J.M.C. has spread all round the coasts of France. It functions on board ships, in schools and colleges, and in seaboard parishes.

The French bishops realized that desperate conditions demanded desperate remedies; that the Church cannot afford to go on using methods which were adequate for winning souls for Christ in the past. Such was their reason for the bold experiment of the *Mission de France* and its counterpart, the *Mission de la Mer*. The faculties and dispensations now granted to the seamen-priests greatly exceed those obtained by the Assumptionists for the *Oeuvres de Mer* more than half a century ago. They may startle the more conservative-minded of the French clergy, as well as those of other countries where conditions are very different to those of France.

Evidences of this new mentality are to be found in most of the publications of the *Jeunesse Maritime Chrétienne,* which is closely associated with the *Mission de la Mer*. The recently issued *Livre de Prières du Marin* is the last word in liturgical prayer books, containing full instructions for the Dialogue Mass and even a special form of Sung Mass for use in coastal parishes. To symbolize the real nature of the Offertory there are rubrical directions for fishermen to carry up to the altar, a ship-model, a net, a basket of fish, and an anchor! How this would delight Msgr. Hellriegel of St. Louis!

Such then, are a few facts about the ideals and methods of apostolate of the twentieth century seamen-priests of France. Whether any similar body of maritime missionaries will ever be established in America or in Great Britain is doubtful. But there can be no doubt whatsoever that in the matter of specially trained priests for seafarers, France is leading the way and setting an example to the whole Catholic world.

The Labor Movement

A Correction

AN IMPORTANT section of last week's column "Labor and the Liturgy" is based on a misreading by John C. Cort of Gerald Ellard's volume, *The Mass of the Future* and the Editors' own unfamiliarity with the book. We have since learned from Father Ellard himself that his chapter 32 (on Occupational Masses) is not to be taken literally. It is in the realm of hope and prediction, not in that of fact. In other words, there is no such series of special labor Masses for the United States "straight from the Vatican." There is no "Mass for Automobile, Aircraft and Agricultural Implement Workers," nor is there one for "Boilermakers and Iron Shipbuilders." Much as the idea has been discussed, there is apparently no Votive Mass "in honor of Christ the Worker," while the Mass "in honor of Our Lady of Housework" also remains in the field of conjecture. In short, there is no *Guild Missal,* or Missal Supplement such as was described in these pages last week. Father Ellard's prophetic speculation was mistaken for fact.

This, then, is not a satisfactory response to Father Reinhold's original plea in *Orate Fratres* for suggestions on how to apply the resources of the Liturgy to the new field of labor-management relations.

THE EDITORS.

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Communications

Holy Year Pilgrims

Cranford, New Jersey

TO THE Editors: Your editorial comment, in the December ninth issue, upon the commercial exploitation of the Holy Year pilgrim was read with approbation. Luxurious transportation is certainly out of keeping with the spirit of Christian pilgrimage; but those of us who are not adventuresome, or are subject to the limitations of time imposed by employment, must avail ourselves of the convenience and dependability afforded by the scheduled ship and airline services.

Of course, it is all very well to remind ourselves, as we sink into a plush reclining chair, that we are not on a pleasure trip; and we may even achieve a penitential state of mind—but, oh, the flesh is so weak—and the cushions are so soft—and the hostess is so distracting.

A few of our more dedicated souls may succeed in their effort not to enjoy themselves. Our more advanced contemplatives will manage to ignore the bodily comfort. But we of the willing spirit but weak flesh must be dismayed by the prospect of an unworthy pilgrimage.

Why are not non-luxury flights made available to the time-harnessed pilgrim!

Why are not non-luxury ships placed in service during the Holy Year for the accommodation of sincere pilgrims who do not wish to flirt with the tempting pastimes and distractions of the modern liner?

It is to this latter question that I would like to direct myself. When most people think of a "non-luxury" ship, the picture they form is of a freighter or a troopship. To be sure, there are freighters which offer passenger accommodations but, from the viewpoint of the pilgrim, they suffer two disadvantages: they do not operate on strict schedules and the shipboard environment is perhaps even less conducive to the spirit of pilgrimage than that of the liner. The troopship? Here, I believe, is the solution to the problem. At the present time, hundreds of ships which served as troop carriers during the war are laid up in the reserve fleet. These ships are well maintained and may be put into service in a short time. If one or several of these vessels were operated, under charter, during the coming year, either by a shipping company or a specially created organization, we would have available an inexpensive and highly suitable means of pilgrim travel. Since all the passengers would be similarly motivated by a willing spirit, it would be possible to have an integrated schedule of devotions—a retreat en voyage. As for the flesh in need of mortification: ask any veteran or war-bride with troopship experience.

An additional but not insignificant benefit of such an undertaking is the fact that the extremely low cost, when compared to liner rates, should make it possible for a great many Catholics with limited financial resources to participate in the Holy Year observance. The existence of such a service would also serve as an indictment of the tourist in pilgrim guise. . . . MILES D. MACMAHON.

The Screen

Come As You Are

SINCE costume pictures usually put me in a take-it-or-leave-it mood, I find reviewing them somewhat awkward. Perhaps the best I can do is describe them and let you decide for yourself. In any case this week the studios are releasing a group of films in which they have dressed and undressed some of our leading stars in some of the fanciest apparel ever seen on the screen.

The brace of writers hired by Producer-director Cecil B. DeMille to do a script on the *"Samson and Delilah"* story had to cook up more than they found in the Bible (Book of Judges, 13 to 16). They didn't change a great deal but they added a lot, and no doubt the very presence of Victor Mature and Hedy Lamarr in the lead roles adds a lot more. Victor is properly handsome and virile as the muscular Samson who wrestles with a lion, robs 30 Philistines of their clothes, slays a thousand more with the jawbone of an ass, and finally (after many love scenes and the most famous haircut in history and the rather strenuous blinding episodes) destroys the temple in a blood-curdling sequence that gives DeMille a chance to outdo even some of his earlier cinematic orgies. And Hedy, dressed in a series of scrumptious robes or semi-dressed in pie plates, is just the dame to lead on this handsome hunk of man—not only to the eventual shearing but to his and her doom. In less flashy roles, George Sanders, as the Saran of Gaza, and Angela Lansbury, as Samson's wife who gets killed off early in the story, are a little more subtle. Except for the fact that it is too long, "Samson and Delilah" won't exactly bore you. Mr. DeMille knows how to keep a picture moving, and whenever things do quiet down, he throws in a lush panorama of banqueting or religious ceremony. All this and Technicolor too. I suppose if the Samson and Delilah story was to be filmed, DeMille was the man to do it. Even the tender episodes are done on a spectacular scale.

Several centuries later we come to Renaissance Italy and *"Prince of Foxes,"* one of the handsomest movies I have ever seen. Producer Sol C. Siegel moved his cast right to Italy to act this story of the Borgias and their accessories. The scenes are the real thing; and the castles (interior and exterior) and the paintings and the locale shots are stunning. But perhaps Director Henry King was overawed by all this beauty. He tells an interesting story, based on Samuel Shellabarger's novel, but in spite of all the reality of setting, this story never comes to life. With interest, we watch Tyrone Power commit scullduggery as a tool of Cesare Borgia (Orson Welles), and later with greater interest we watch him use his wit and sword on the side of good; but somehow the whole piece is still make-believe. The cast is excellent: Wanda Hendrix, Everett Sloane, Katina Paxinou, Felix Aylmer; and the black-and-white photography is first-rate. Maybe what this picture needs is a theme that touches you to the heart. If, however, you'll settle for beauty and der-

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ring-do, "Prince of Foxes" will keep you entertained.

"Black Magic" was also filmed in Italy and also has some impressive backgrounds; but alas it has a story so exaggerated in the telling and so hammed up in the acting that one can't possibly take any of the picture seriously. Producer-director Gregory Ratoff started out with a good idea in making a movie based on Dumas' "Memoirs of a Physician." Cagliostro and his use of hypnotism are a natural for the talents of Orson Welles who gives his all in the portrayal, an all, however, that soon becomes a surfeit not redeemed by the other members of the large cast or the lovely Italian scenery.

Danny Kaye dons a costume, too, for his new comedy —an adaptation of Gogol's *"The Inspector General."* Danny and his special brand of surrealism fit the title role very well indeed. Although a bumbling illiterate, Danny is mistaken for the general appointed by the emperor to ferret out bribery and corruption in small communities. This leads to many amusing situations, but I wish Producer Jerry Wald and Director Henry Koster hadn't pushed everything to such extremes. The script has some good laughs, and the Kaye numbers (music and lyrics by Sylvia Fine) are done in Kaye's best style. There were times when he was doing the title song (which he does with himself as four different personalities) or when he sings the disease ditty or the giddy satire on gypsy music, when he seemed as inspired as Chaplin; and that's no small praise. If you like Danny, don't miss his wonderful numbers in "The Inspector General" even if you don't care for costumes and Technicolor.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

The Stage

Gentlemen Prefer Blondes

IF THE town must have someone to toast—and presumably it must—I think it's a very good thing that Carol Channing has become clearly and unmistakably *it*. Miss Channing is clear and unmistakable indeed. She is too big, too blonde, too specially daffy ever to be confused with anyone else. And with half the fringe-people rushing around raving about Lynn *Fonteyn,* it is as well to have everything plain and easy, for a season at least. It's also important to mention that Miss Channing is not only in this Joseph Fields-Anita Loos show, but more, she is actually large enough to support it on every side. It's a dull business when she's not on stage.

Aside from two fair songs, "A Little Girl From Little Rock" and "Diamonds Are A Girl's Best Friend," both devoted to the Blonde in question, Jule Styne's score is very middling stuff. And Leo Robin's lyrics, plus Agnes deMille's dance-schemes do not add up to much more. Actually, and this will seem strange for a musical, the thing is at its best in prose, whenever there are what I take to be direct quotations from Miss Loos's celebrated classic of the twenties. It is when Miss Channing's Lorelei, in long conversation with Yvonne Adair's Dorothy, is explaining Gentlemen and their ways, that the piece does achieve the right mixture of low logic and high hilarity, and does justify its book. I wish Miss Loos had been able to provide more of this quality.

And I wish all of the movers could have taken a page from the wonderful and subtle "Billion Dollar Baby" of a few years back. For, Oliver Smith and Miles White have seemed to lean over backwards rather than to be authentically in period. Only Alice Pearce, in a character role, gets to wear a real built-on waistline, somewhere down about her knees. And her hats are inspired. Everyone else looks not out of the twenties, nor yet out of the forties, but only rather colorfully out of nowhere. And even Miss Channing's make-up and hair-do seemed to me rather more grotesque than historical. However, it is obvious that these several quibbles are late. The show is sold out beyond April and I feel its honest point is to present you with an honestly great comedian: as crazy as she is dazzling, and as witty as she is openly warm-hearted. All in all, an admirable job. (*At the Ziegfeld*)

KAPPO PHELAN.

Catholic International News

Lost Illusion

THE November 26th issue of *The Tablet* (128 Sloane Street, S.W. 1, London) reports on a recent movement among former interned members of the French resistance.

During the past fortnight great arguments have been aroused in Paris by David Rousset, a young Frenchman, who spent several years in German concentration camps during the war, and who, after his liberation, resolved to work for a world without the nightmare of concentration camps. He wrote two books, *l'Univers concentrationnaire* and *Les jours de notre mort,* which have received great publicity and have been praised by political and literary critics as "outstanding epics of human suffering." He has also helped to organize his fellow-ex-prisoners, and has soon become one of their leaders.

Not long after the war he began to feel much disturbed by the reports of Soviet concentration and forced-labor camps. Like the majority of his fellow-ex-prisoners, he was in 1945 well-disposed towards the Russians, and for a long time he refused to believe the stories of those who succeeded in escaping from the Soviet camps. Yet as the amount of information grew, and as a pile of irrefutable proofs gathered on his writing table, M.

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Rousset felt that some action had to be taken. Choosing a non-political paper, the *Figaro Litéraire,* he issued a vigorous appeal to former prisoners and deportees, asking them to form a committee which would try to obtain permission from the Soviet authorities to go to Russia and to investigate these labor camps on the spot.

M. Rousset's appeal received great publicity, and so did a Press conference which he held last week in the headquarters of the *Fédération Nationale* of deported and interned members of the Resistance. Many journalists, authors, scientists and politicians offered him their co-operation, and tens of thousands of former prisoners enthusiastically greeted his initiative. The Communist Press delivered a vicious attack upon the insolent writer who had dared to doubt Soviet innocence, and *l'Humanité* accused him, in one single article, of "whitewashing the Hitlerites," of "manufacturing morale for the mercenaries of the bomb," and of "acting as a drumbeater for the great massacre." The venomous nature of this Communist attack could be equaled only by the language used in the same newspapers about Tito.

Ths similarity should be well noted, as a most interesting symptom. What the Communists mind is not so much the fact that once more the question of Soviet concentration camps has been reopened, but rather the circumstances in which it happens. They do not feel particularly affected when the matter is discussed in the United Nations, or when it crops up, as it does often enough, in avowedly anti-Communist circles. This time, however, the discussion affects a *milieu* very precious to them. In most countries the associations and federations of former inmates of concentration camps are markedly pro-Soviet, and often they are Communist-dominated. Rousset himself is a "man of the left," and on many occasions has taken part in Communist-inspired rallies and "peace congresses." He has now been joined by M. Riquet, Vice-President of the Communist-dominated organization of political prisoners, and by several outstanding Frenchmen, each of them enjoying a solid pro-Soviet reputation. His appeal has stirred opinion outside France also, and it is expected that former concentration-camp prisoners from Belgium, Holland, Norway and some other countries will join him in his demand for an investigation; and, just as in France, it is again Pro-Soviet circles which are affected.

It is quite obvious that there is only very little hope, if any at all, that the investigation committee will ever get Soviet permission to travel to Russia and to conduct its investigations there. Yet a negative answer is an answer as well, and M. Rousset deserves great merit for having put his question in the way it has been put, and for putting it to those who, up to now, have too often succeeded in avoiding an answer.

Christian Trade Unions

WRITING in the December 9th issue of the *Catholic Herald* (67 Fleet Street, London, E.C. 4) Andrew Boyle, *Herald* correspondent, reports on the reaction of European Christian Trade Union leaders to the decisions taken in their regard at the recent international labor conference. Boyle describes the Union leaders as strongly resentful of what one of them described as "an attempt to dictate the annihilation of the oldest international labor body in the world." They were, he reported, "unanimously resolved not to take it lying down."

M. Gaston Tessier, leader of the French Christian Unions, and President of the International Christian Federation, gave me the full facts of the dispute which marred the harmony of Conference proceedings at the outset:

"The trouble really arose," he said, "when invitations to the London talks were sent out. It was decided that the Christian Unions should be asked to attend only if the National Headquarters in the various countries raised no objections.

"What was overlooked, or conveniently forgotten, was the deep antipathy dividing the Christian and Socialist organizations in countries like Belgium and Holland. In consequence, the French delegation was the sole Christian group represented when the Conference opened."

M. Tessier told me of the "storm which blew up immediately." He recalled the angry words of Signor Giulio Pastore, Catholic head of the Free Italian Unions, who declared himself ready to quit the talks unless this insult were withdrawn.

He added: "Differences were finally settled in the usual British way—by referring the matter to a special committee. It was then agreed, by 46 votes to 8, to invite the other Christian Trade Unions, conditionally.

"That condition was nothing less than an ultimatum. It laid down that the Christian Unions must sever their links with the Christian International in the next two years.

"All I can say at present is that we don't like ultimatums. And we don't propose to throw away at a snap of the fingers the hard work, experience, and achievements of thirty years."

When I spoke to M. August Vanistendael, Assistant Secretary-General of the International Federation, he appeared reasonably satisfied that "a working arrangement can be reached in the next two years with the new Free World Labor body."

But he was prompt in repudiating the idea that the three million members of the Christian International would give way to pressure. "What we have managed to do during the last few years is proof both of our strength and of our positive contribution as Christians to the building of a sounder social order."

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Of Note

Maritain on Social Action

A CURRENT newsletter of the National Catholic Welfare Conference includes the following quotation from a lecture "On the Meaning of Contemporary Atheism" by Jacques Maritain, delivered at Notre Dame last spring. The July *Review of Politics* (Notre Dame, Indiana) printed the entire lecture.

> The Fathers of the Church were great revolutionists. Thomas Aquinas in the cultural field, Saint Vincent de Paul in the social field, are eminent examples of genuine radicals, whose initiative brought about decisive changes in the history of civilization. For centuries temporal progress in the world has been fostered by the saints.
>
> Yet here is the paradox that I just mentioned—the day when, in the course of modern history, a particularly inhuman structure of society, caused by the industrial revolution, made the problem of social justice manifestly crucial; when, at the same time, the human mind became aware of the social as a specific object of knowledge and activity, and when the first attempts to create workers' organizations provided the beginnings of a historical force capable of acting upon social structures — then should not saints have taken the lead in the protest of the poor and of the labor movement toward its historical coming of age? In actual fact except for a few men of faith, like Ozanam in France and Toniolo in Italy (they are not yet canonized, but some day they might be), the task, as we know, was not led by saints. It even happened that atheists, instead of saints, took the lead in social matters, much to the misfortune of all.
>
> Why such a tragic defection? I consider it hard not to see in it a kind of punishment of the Christian world, which for a long period had more or less betrayed Christianity in its practical behavior, and despised the lessons of the saints, and forsaken the immense herd of the hopeless whom destitution and unlivable conditions of existence riveted to hell on earth. Let us not be mistaken. During the time of which I am speaking, the saints were not lacking on earth; there was a considerable flowering of saints in the last century. But they did not pass beyond the field of spiritual, apostolic or charitable activities; they did not cross the threshold of temporal, social, secular activity. And thus the gap was not filled in. Because in the historical age which is ours, the indirect repercussion of the inner renewal of conscience over the external structures of society, which remains a basic necessity, and by means of which such social changes as the abolition of slavery were progressively made possible, is definitely not enough. An activity directly aiming at improving and recasting the structures of the temporal life, a specifically social activity is also needed.

Lay Communities

THE *Jamaican Cooperator* (IA North Street, Kingston, Jamaica, B.W.I.) is a letter circulated by Father John Peter Sullivan, S.J., a missionary working in the social apostolate in the British West Indies. In his December letter Father Sullivan tells of two members of a Dutch "secular institute" (made up of people who live the life of a religious community while carrying on lay professional activity) who recently visited him:

> They are not "brothers". They are not "religious" in the technical sense. They belong to no Order or Congregation. They wear no distinctive attire. They are definitely laymen but laymen with a difference and that big difference is this: they are full time on the job, in fact *overtime* and with no pay at that. They are "dedicated". They live a community life. They have private but perpetual vows of poverty and chastity and an oath of obedience to their Superior General.
>
> Headquarters in Rjswijk near the Hague in Holland, founded in 1922 by the learned Dutch Jesuit, Father Jacques van Ginniken, S.J., their rule of life modeled on the constitutions of the Society of Jesus, the Crusaders have eight establishments in Holland itself, one at Dajabon in the Dominican Republic and one in Curacao, main island of the Netherlands West Indies group in the southern Caribbean. Currently there are ninety members in the young society including eight applicants or quasi novices now in their two year training course which gears them for their vows and their life's work in the apostolate. Of these eight applicants four are West Indian boys, one hailing from Martinique and three from Curacao.
>
> Apart from their activity in the lay apostolate their daily life follows the traditional community pattern of religious orders. There is the early morning rising, the half hour meditation each day, regular spiritual reading, examination of conscience, visits to the Blessed Sacrament, daily Mass and Communion of course, obligatory but brief prayers to be said by each Crusader each day. With typical Dutch logicality the Crusaders emphasize the brevity of those obligatory, daily prayers, telling us that their prayers are such as can be conveniently said by the average Catholic layman working on the average job. Then there is strict adherence to the monthly day of recollection and the annual eight day retreat. . . .
>
> Furthermore to remove all doubts the clear cut Canonical status of the Crusaders of St. John and similar "secular institutes" was definitively stated by Pius XII in his apostolic constitution of February 2, 1947 entitled *Provida Mater Ecclesia.*

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• Two Poems

Living with the Holy Ghost

Living with the Holy Ghost is having a mind that is always interesting.
It is keeping the vigil of mystery, earthless and still.
One leans to catch the stirring of the Spirit,
Strange as the wind's will.

The soul that walks in the Wind of the Holy Ghost
Turns like a wandering weathervane toward love.
It may lament with Job and Jeremias,
Echo the wounded beast, the mateless dove;
It may rejoice in spaciousness of meadow
That emulates the liberty of sky.
Always it walks in waylessness, unknowing.
It has cast down forever from its hand
The compass of the whither and the why.

Living with the Holy Ghost is having a heart that is always loving.
It is becoming love, and like to Him
Toward Whom we strain with metaphors of creatures:
Fire-sweep and water-rush and the wind's whim.
The soul is all activity, all silence.
It, though it surges Godward to its goal,
Yet holds, as moving earth holds sleeping noonday,
The peace that is the listening of the soul.

JESSICA POWERS.

Woodnote

All the pages of becoming,
So carefully bound together,
Blow away at the last
Like leaves in autumn weather.
All leaves, like fall leaves, rot away
To make another spring
(But ah, how many birds long gone
Taught present birds to sing.)

TOM BOGGS.

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Books

The Sheltering Sky. Paul Bowles. New Directions. $2.75.

IT HAS been a number of years since a first novel by an American has contained as much literary persuasion and original interest as *The Sheltering Sky*. Faulkner's style comes to mind, Carson McCuller's, and that of Mr. Bowles' wife, Jane Bowles—qualities of characterization and of writing, of uncommon use of fictional contrivances, to create tension and style. It is also the first time to my knowledge that an American novelist has met the French Existentialists on their ground and held them to a draw. From the first page to the last, the story stealthily increases in suspense and insinuation.

A young American couple is accompanied by a second man, a mere acquaintance, on a trip to North Africa. Tunner, the man, is an inquisitive extrovert, sufficiently snobbish to find Port and Kit worth the journey. Port Moresby (sic) is a cultivated, cold fish, who has consciously nourished his frigidity to inanition. The book, however, is Kit's, a woman given to omens and superstitions, with a nervous sensitivity that is veined with fear. Their marriage has long been only a formal union between two mutually dependent people and yet each hopes by this excursion, to make more of it. In a desultory way the three set out; soon personalities jar; the land and its climate become protagonists; the couple's feeling of separation grows ominous until in the midst of the desert it is finally, ironically ruptured and a stranger new journey begins.

It is too late to call such people escapists; only at a time when so many people are deemed neurotic is it fashionable to believe one ever escapes from one's self; only when there is so much talk of One World, is it suspect to move from continent to continent. It is even too easy to call them lost and irresponsible because this implies something to be lost from or to lose, some measure of faith and conduct. Paul Bowles is not inclined towards such contradictions. His characters are profoundly contemporary, out of a world that has neither God nor ethics. "The fact that I breathe," Port shouts, "is my justification. . . . I'm not going to carry a passport to existence around with me. . . ." He and Kit were not born lost but at a loss. There is no passion in the story or its telling but there is poignancy in the troubled feeling of responsibility between the man and wife, in their respect for love. This is elementary but it is also primary and urgent, the first step to a goal they never reach.

Unlike other records of the same modern dilemma, this is not history, nor argument, nor description of moral paralysis. The cataclysm has occurred; the land is waste yet there are mirages; the water holes beckon. This is a carefully devised piece of fiction of unfaltering interest about some of those "ridiculous" mirages.

FLORENCE CODMAN.

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The Ironing Board. Christopher Morley. Doubleday. $3.00.

Holofernes: This is a gift that I have, simple, simple: a foolish, extravagant spirit, full of forms, figures, shapes, objects, ideas, apprehensions, motions, revolutions: these are begot in the ventricle of memory, nourished in the womb of pia mater, and delivered upon the mellowing of occasion. But the gift is good in those in whom it is acute, and I am thankful for it. *Love's Labor Lost, act IV, scene II.*

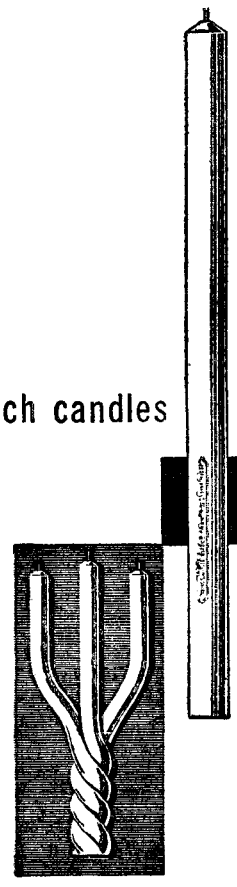
WORD-infatuation is an exciting, heady and often parlous business. The unusual noun or adjective, the spinning *tour de force* of a brilliant phrase frequently becomes an addiction that brings nauseous whimsicality, sterile erudition and puts everything out of joint.

Christopher Morley lo! these many years, has given us such charming tales as *Parnassus On Wheels* and *Where the Blue Begins,* not to mention much cute and comfy verse, *belles-lettres,* and *Kitty Foyle.* Now a culling of his recent essays has appeared under the title of *The Ironing Board.* Mr. Morley's writing has a strong sentimental yank. I can well remember when a friend was finishing an interrupted college career at Pembroke College, Cambridge, how the Manhattan verse of Christopher Morley evoked in him a groaning nostalgia. As he stood reading aloud bits of it I could feel not a little moonish-over-Manhattan myself. In *The Ironing Board* there is much of the standard Morley *retour familier aux temps perdus.*

A very Holofernes is our Mr. Morley, and his love's labor is far from lost to judge by the ubiquitous esteem he is held in by book clubs and other intellectual aggregations. His latest collection of essays covers a post-war trip to England (the best piece in the book) and several whimsical sorties to the Sherlock Holmes bailiwick, as well as some rather sick-making pirouettes on joining clubs, *The Tempest* and the autographing author, to name a few. The author pulls out all the stops of his emotional Wurlitzer, and through enervating repetition and bundles of tiresome parentheses, informs us he is a regular, erudite guy and a quaint pater familias and a pretty important person untouched by literary vanities.

I suppose *The Ironing Board* will be lapped up eagerly along with all the rest of the cloying seasonal eggnog. It is a book full of generous, often honest intentions and a swashbuckling, journalistic outlook on most matters. Only in the case of his tributes to Max Beerbohm and Walter de la Mare does Christopher Morley tip his vizor in a straight-forward fashion. Aside from this piece and the English trip, I'm afraid Mr. Morley's ironing bored me to a shuddering malaise.

ELIZABETH JOHNSON.



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Courts on Trial. Jerome Frank. Princeton University Press. $5.00.

JEROME FRANK, onetime chairman of the SEC, now judge on the Second Federal Court of Appeals, has in this book summarized and rounded out a theme he has been pressing for over two decades: justice depends less on the solemn pronouncements of our exalted appellate courts than on what happens amid the tumult of the trial court.

The popular assumption is that Rules of Law *times* Objective Facts *equals* Decision in the particular case (Frank's formula). And yet, as Judge Frank points out, it is highly questionable whether our present court-room practices really cut through to the "objective facts". The facts which determine legal consequences are the *facts found by judges and juries,* which may or may not correspond to the true historical facts.

Hence, if in fact Jones negligently injured Smith, but the jury finds Jones conducted himself with due care, it is scant consolation to Smith (and scant tribute to justice) that the law of negligence is "clear and certain."

In Judge Frank's words, then, "The just settlement of disputes demands a legal system in which courts can and do strive tirelessly to get as close as is humanly possible to the actual facts of specific court-room controversies." But instead of being an intelligent fact-finding procedure, now ". . . a law suit remains a sort of sublimated, regulated brawl . . ." with lawyers trying to throw sand in the eyes of the fact-finders. As empirical verification of his argument one might suggest a jaunt to the nearest trial court.

Frank suggests a number of more or less feasible reforms: the elimination of juries save in major criminal cases, special training for trial judges and juries, sweeping revision of the much-criticized "exclusionary" rules of evidence (e.g. a witness may testify as to the "facts" but state no inferences), informalize court-rooms, strip the robes from trial judges, revise drastically the curriculum of the law school.

It may well be that America is not now sophisticated enough to accept the brutal fact that our government is and must be, basically, in large measure, one of fallible men, not certain laws. Some faith in the certainty of positive law and the sureness of justice may be, at least for the present, the indispensable cement of our social structure. If so, then the enlightenment must be spread slowly.

AL A. SOMMER, JR.

The Mediaeval Mind. Henry Osborn Taylor. Harvard University Press. 2 volumes. $10.00.

TAYLOR'S book on The Mediaeval Mind, first published in 1911, has excellent chapters about the Latinizing of the West, the intellectual interest of the Latin Fathers, the spell of the classics and the evolution of medieval Latin poetry. For those who don't specialize in legal problems, the chapter on the medieval appropriation of the Roman Law is very useful. The chapters

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on knighthood, romantic chivalry and epic poetry are rich in original observations. The chapters on religious movements are less satisfactory and the late Middle Ages are badly neglected. The book leads only to the time of Thomas Aquinas and Bonaventura; of the later scholastics only Duns Scotus and Occam are shortly treated. The book ends with a not especially penetrating chapter on Dante as representing the medieval synthesis.

Taylor's work was very stimulating in the days of its first appearance. It was slightly revised and amplified in the second edition which appeared in 1914. But then the author, it seems, lost interest in the medieval period and only a few slight alterations occurred in 1925. In that fourth edition most of the new studies were haughtily neglected. Since then the book has simply been reprinted. The recently published edition is the fifth unaltered printing of the fourth edition. The rich literature of the last quarter of a century which changed many aspects of our knowledge of the Middle Ages is entirely disregarded.

It is regrettable that the publishers did not care about bringing the book up to date. Taylor's *Mediaeval Mind* is not like the works of Gibbon or Burckhardt, a literary monument, a classical work of historiography, worth preserving in the original form. It is a not too brilliantly written textbook, rich in quotations and informative material. Its usefulness is reduced by the total neglect of recent research, and with each reprinting this lack becomes greater and more painful.

MAX FISCHER.

The Vatican. Ann Carnahan with photographs by David Seymour. Farrar, Straus. $4.00.

WITH thousands of American Catholics planning a trip to Rome for the Holy Year, I suppose a book like this was inevitable. *The Vatican* is as earnestly slick and tailored as any *Life* feature, and after you've said that you've said just about everything that can be said, for and against it. In ten chapters the author tells the Holy Year pilgrim (and those who must stay home too, the publishers add thoughtfully) about the tiny independent state of Pius XII, its history, customs, laws, government and the two thousand citizens who serve its needs. In some detail she describes the fabulous art treasures there, the galleries and libraries and St. Peter's itself. A full third of the book is concerned with the Holy Father, his personal history, public personality, his exhausting daily schedule and awesome world position. At all times she is selective, factual and quietly admiring. Yet there is no ring of deep conviction or strong feeling in the book but rather the effortless, unquestioning reverence of the public-relations expert. This is not said in criticism of Miss Carnahan's research or of her polished journalese. It is only to observe that with feelings on the place of the Vatican in world history running so high these days it comes as something of a shock to find 200 pages on the subject that read like a dispassionate hard-cover travel guide.

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to arrive there a well-informed American ready to see in the concrete what you already know from reading, *The Vatican* is the book for you—at least until another one with more research (of the journalistic, slick-magazine-feature variety) behind it appears. If you are another kind of traveler, the type who likes to put off finding out about Swiss guards until he's actually talking to one, in that case save the $4.00 for your souvenir budget.

David Seymour took the numerous photos which illustrate *The Vatican,* for *Look* magazine. The environs of Vatican City are among the most photogenic spots on the continent. History, architecture and colorful ecclesiastical garb combine to turn any camera-session into a photographer's taste of heaven. Mr. Seymour took some good pictures. It is unfortunate that the technical limitations of their reproduction in the book leave so many of them disappointingly fuzzy and depressingly grey.

JOHN COGLEY.

Webster's Geographical Dictionary. G. & C. Merriam Company (Springfield, Mass.). $8.50.

ANY standard general dictionary is a good source of definitions and identifications of names and places. The 40,000 entries in this new volume, however, expand the geographical, historical and other information about specific towns and areas considerably. What is particularly useful is the series of nearly two hundred black-and-white maps which embody considerable factual data. Needless to say, such a reference volume is particularly useful now in that it is right up-to-date.

• REVIEWERS •

Florence CODMAN was at one time in the publishing business and has contributed literary criticism and reviews to several leading periodicals.

Elizabeth JOHNSON writes for many English and American reviews. She is now preparing an English historical-biographical study.

Al A. SOMMER, Jr. is studying at the Harvard Law School.

Max FISCHER, at present on the faculty of the New School in New York, does editorial work for the foreign-language press.

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